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# LETTER DATED 10 SEPTEMBER 1999 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF PORTUGAL TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

In accordance with the relevant provisions of the United Nations Charter and the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, Portugal requested on 8 September an urgent meeting of the Council to consider the situation in East Timor. This request was made bearing in mind the reports of mass killings and wanton destruction in the Territory as well as the imminent evacuation of UNAMET staff and other international personnel.

Following the request of Portugal, a meeting of the Security Council to consider this question has also been requested by Brazil, a member of the Council (S/1999/961).

While four days have passed, such a meeting has not yet taken place. Yet no visible improvement of the situation in East Timor has occurred since my Government requested a meeting of the Security Council to consider this situation. On the contrary, while widespread killings and destruction of property have continued, there has been a marked deterioration of the humanitarian situation on the ground. Indeed, even today UNAMET's compound was attacked in total disrespect of the appeal made by the Council. There is an impending threat that it will be attacked again with further loss of life of UNAMET staff and East Timorese who have taken refuge in the compound. Thousands of totally destitute internally displaced people have been arriving on the western part of the island fleeing for their lives. Others have taken refuge in the mountains and are facing starvation. This situation must not be allowed to continue.

In view of Indonesia's blatant inability to restore order and security to the Territory, I would again like to reiterate, under instructions from my Government, Portugal's request, as contained in a letter addressed to you on 8 September 1999 (S/1999/955), for an immediate meeting of the Security Council to consider the situation in East Timor. The Security Council cannot continue to discuss in private while massacres are being perpetrated in East Timor with total impunity. Indeed, there is a need for the international community to be made aware of the grave situation that constitutes a serious violation of international humanitarian law.

I request that this letter be circulated to all members of the Council as a matter of urgency and issued as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Antonio MONTEIRO
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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